



# SYRIA



## INTRODUCTION

Following World War I, France acquired a mandate over the northern portion of the former Ottoman Empire province of Syria. The French administered the area as Syria until granting it independence in 1946. Syria united with Egypt in February 1958 to form the United Arab Republic. In September 1961, the two entities separated, and the Syrian Arab Republic was reestablished.

## GOVERNMENT

### Chief of State

President Bashar al-ASAD

### Head of Government

Prime Minister Hussein ARNOUS

### Government Type

presidential republic; highly authoritarian regime

### Capital

Damascus

### Legislature

unicameral People's Assembly or Majlis al-Shaab (250 seats)

## GEOGRAPHY

### Area

Total: 187,437 sq km

Land: 185,887 sq km

Water: 1,550 sq km

### Climate

mostly desert; hot, dry, sunny summers (June to August) and mild, rainy winters (December to February) along coast; cold weather with snow or sleet periodically in Damascus

### Natural Resources

petroleum, phosphates, chrome and manganese ores, asphalt, iron ore, rock salt, marble, gypsum, hydropower

## ECONOMY

### Economic Overview

low-income Middle Eastern economy; prior infrastructure and economy devastated by 11-year civil war; ongoing US sanctions; sporadic trans-migration during conflict; currently being supported by World Bank trust fund; ongoing hyperinflation

**GDP (Purchasing Power Parity)** \$50.28 billion (2015 est.)

**GDP per capita (Purchasing Power Parity)** \$2,900 (2015 est.)

**Industries** - petroleum, textiles, food processing, beverages, tobacco, phosphate rock mining, cement, oil seeds crushing, automobile assembly

**Agricultural products** - wheat, barley, milk, olives, tomatoes, oranges, potatoes, sheep milk, lemons, limes

**Exports** \$1.85 billion (2017 est.)

olive oil, cumin seeds, pistachios, tomatoes, apples, pears, spices, pitted fruits (2019)

**partners:** Saudi Arabia 23%, Turkey 18%, Egypt 14%, UAE 8%, Jordan 7%, Kuwait 5% (2019)

**Imports** \$6.279 billion (2017 est.)

cigarettes, broadcasting equipment, wheat flours, sunflower oil, refined petroleum (2019)

**partners:** Turkey 27%, China 22%, UAE 14%, Egypt 5% (2019)

## PEOPLE & SOCIETY

### Population

20.4 million (July 2021 est.)

### Population Growth

NA

### Ethnicity

Arab ~50%, Alawite ~15%, Kurd ~10%, Levantine ~10%, other ~15% (includes Druze, Ismaili, Imami, Nusairi, Assyrian, Turkoman, Armenian)

### Language

Arabic (official), Kurdish, Armenian, Aramaic, Circassian, French, English

### Religion

Muslim 87% (official; includes Sunni 74% and Alawi, Ismaili, and Shia 13%), Christian 10% (includes Orthodox, Uniate, and Nestorian), Druze 3%

